

# In fact

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For The Millions Who Want a Free Press

June 23, 1941 George Seldes, Editor; Robert Terrall, Assoc. Ed.

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## Trained Against Labor

IN FACT has received numerous reports from new army camps that soldiers are being trained to fight American labor. The latest report is from Fort Hancock. An officer is authority for the statement that soldiers get gas bomb and machine gun practice for "riot duty" in case of strikes.

## "You're in the Army Now"

DURING Conscription debate proponents declared it was the only democratic way and that it was a patriotic duty to give a year to the service of one's country. The Selective Draft Board's order to strikers to return to work or be sent to the Army is, according to labor leaders, an un-American action since it makes service in the Army a punishment.

## Why Wall St Booms

TWO things started a small boom in Wall St. The strikebreaking in California by US Army caused an immediate rise of 1 to 3 points.

Official admissions that the bill empowering the President to seize property was actually a measure to smash strikes, carried the boom forward. The Wall St. Journal said: "Reliable sources said one of the main reasons for the new bill is to give the President more authority to cope with strikes." Journal of Commerce said: "Authoritative officials tonight indicated that one objective behind the (property seizure) bill was to give the gov't powers to settle troublesome labor disputes."

## How Press Falsified Strike

THE entire American press, with the possible exception of a few newspapers, falsified the California strike just as they have falsified the story of every great strike in American history. Only one newspaper refrained from falsifying the NY bus strike, IN FACT showed recently. Now readers are sending in many sample pages showing how the public again was fooled.

The truth was told by some papers before the Army marched. Some papers stated that: 1) the negotiations had gone on for 6 weeks but the company refused pay equaling the industry; 2) the fact that the union voted 5,829 to 210 to strike, supported by International Union representatives; and 3) the big profits, ownership, anti-labor policy of North American Aviation.

The press did exactly what Hitler and Mussolini did when they destroyed the labor movement: it raised the red bogey. The NY Post actually blamed it on Stalin's desire "to impress Hitler." There was only a question of a decent wage, no political question, no "subversive" question, until the press manufac-

## Use of Troops Against Labor Called Fascism, First Move in Wartime Dictatorship

**V**ASTLY more significant than the President's use of troops in peacetime against unarmed citizens—after a half century during which the shooting down of labor and the breaking of strikes had been left to state militia and American Legionnaires—is the charge, now being voiced by independent members of Congress, the more militant labor unions, and Labor's Non-Partisan League, that the California episode marks the first act of wartime fascist dictatorship in America.

For exactly a year now IN FACT has quoted the Wall Street press, anti-war Senators, expensive confidential newsletters, and certain free independent weeklies on the preparations to employ fascistic or Hitlerite methods for the purpose of fighting fascism and Hitlerism.

It is a fact that the Roosevelt administration itself prepared a complete dictatorship program and drafted the bills by which fascism would come to the US legally. (It may be recalled that Huey Long uttered the profound remark that "Of course we'll have fascism in this country—it will come as an anti-fascist movement.") The American fascist program is described in a Senate Naval Affairs Committee report, which incidentally also states that the US cannot be invaded and that we need a navy and air force for adequate defense but no universal peacetime conscription.

## Navy Dep't Report Foresees Fascism

As if foreseeing the dictatorial steps which have marked the year, from conscription to the use of Federal troops against labor, the report concludes:

"If we allow ourselves to become engaged in the war in Europe as we did in the last war, one thing is certain—the whole energies of our people of necessity will be ordered, regimented, and directed by a single authority. Everything—manpower, industrial power, wealth (?), production, transportation, Liberty itself—will be at the service of the government. It makes no difference by what name such a government is called, it will assume absolute power over the life of every citizen.

"Bills to accomplish the above purpose have already been drafted and probably ready for presentation to the Congress. If the proposed bills are enacted into law they would take away the individual rights of every citizen and convert this country, within a few days, into a Totalitarian dictatorship. . . .

"Another section of one of the proposed bills authorizes the President to suspend in whole or in part listed laws of the United States. Blank spaces are available for the insertion during a period of war hysteria of the titles of the various statutes to be placed at the Executive's mercy. . . .

"All of these proposed laws and plans are based upon the false assumption that to defend ourselves it will be necessary for us to build up a huge army and put forth an effort which will strain every national resource to the utmost.

"All of this vast machinery of control, and all these dictatorial powers will be unnecessary if we will do some straight thinking on the subject . . . and carry out faithfully the sound military policy of defending ourselves upon the seas.

"If we go to war again we shall be fighting to preserve our free democratic institutions . . . Why should we go to war to defend freedom if we must begin by destroying it with our own hands?"

## Press Suppressed Admirals' Report

These words may sound incredible, especially to readers of the standard press of US which generally suppressed the document because at the time it was issued the press was 87% or more for conscription, and this document stated expressly that if we have a navy and air force we do not need conscription because we cannot be invaded even if Britain is defeated.

The document was prepared for the Naval Affairs Committee by the testimony of experts, including: Admirals Stark and Leahy, chief and former chief of naval operations; Admirals Cook and King, Bureau of Aeronautics; Admiral Laing, former president naval war college; Admiral Taussig and Major George Fielding Eliot. It was printed May 15, 1940. It is known as: Senate Report No.

1615; 76th Congress, 3rd session. IN FACT has a copy of this report. In Sept 1940 Senator Walsh wrote that he reaffirmed its contents.

Another plan for fascism was drawn up by three of Att'y Gen'l (now appointed Supreme Court Justice) Jackson's assistants and published in the Harvard Law Review. It is a plan for forced labor in wartime; it claims that compulsory labor is not limited to dictatorships, but is essential to democracies; that the phase "labor conscription" should not be allowed to cloud the issue; that propaganda should be used to popularize forced labor. The Jackson men show how social gains made by labor can be set aside, union contracts ignored, closed shop agreements broken, minimum laws for women and children set aside; in short, how a native American fascism can be produced in time of emergency within the law.

During the conscription debate IN FACT reported Senators saying, "Of course it's dictatorship, but it's only temporarily." The Kiplinger newsletter (May 18 1940—IN FACT regrets it is not permitted to quote newer Kiplinger letters) said, "In the event of war, a virtual dictatorship of course." A year later when Mr Roosevelt declared a national emergency even the pro-war, pro-Roosevelt press admitted it was a dictatorship. NY Times' Washington correspondent, Arthur Krock, admitted the President could "produce a state of war by executive action alone" without consulting Congress. In many respects the President had assumed dictatorial rights equal to those of his enemies.

### Main Facts in Defense-Labor Situation

Before the President used the Army to break the Inglewood, California, airplane strike, hysteria was whipped up in Congress and throughout the nation by the press. The press devoted its front pages to inciting the public against the strikers, and most papers did not print the facts, which are simply:

- 1) The corporations, especially aviation companies, have made enormous profits, and are sharing war orders for billions, with large profits guaranteed.
- 2) The cost of living has gone up.
- 3) The corporations refuse to pay small increases in wages and force their employees to strike.
- 4) The big newspapers, most of whose publishers are today fighting their own employees over money matters, have falsified the story of labor.
- 5) Several members of Congress, elected by the \$25,000,000 or \$30,000,000 fund raised by corporations to control elections (fully documented, IN FACT Nov 4 1940) have taken advantage of press-created hysteria to pay off their backers by introducing anti-labor legislation.
- 6) The Carta de Lavoro or Labor Charter of Italian Fascist Corporations, by which Mussolini destroyed the free labor unions, prevents strikes, provides for gov't troops to control plants, and otherwise destroys the hard-won rights of labor in exactly the same manner as US anti-labor legislation already passed and the Vinson and other bills now pending. Abroad this is called fascism. Nevertheless, all these measures, and especially a proposal to amend or destroy the Wagner Act, are approved by the newspapers which style themselves anti-fascist today, notably the NY Times and Herald Tribune, Los Angeles Times, the Hearst and Howard chains of some 40 city papers. Included among the most hysterically anti-labor papers are both supporters and opponents of the administration's foreign policy.

### The North American Aviation Case

At North American Aviation Co the workingmen getting 50¢ an hour (\$20 a week) asked for the same rate of pay which other big airplane companies have granted, sometimes after strikes.

The press did not inform the public that North American made a profit of \$7,090,333 in 1940, which was a profit of \$855 on the labor of each workman. It had \$200,000,000 worth of orders. It is controlled and partly owned by General Motors, which last week paid a stock bonus of \$1,700,000 to 25 officers. General Motors is controlled, and 23% owned, by DuPont. DuPont, through OPM Director Knudsen and approximately 15 other highly-placed dollar-a-year men, has a powerful influence on the defense program. North American, it may be noted, follows the policy of the aircraft industry by refusing to hire Negroes, and it has participated fully in all the financial scandals that have rocked the business in the past twenty years. When the fantastic corruption involved in airmail contracts and government subsidies was exposed, resulting in the Air Mail Act of 1934 requiring the separation of manufacturing and transport companies, North American did not divest itself of control of Eastern Airplanes till 1938. (Source: The Aviation Business, by Elspeth E Freudenthal.)

While the government was driving North American workers into the plant with bayonets, Secretary of War Stimson was telling reporters that J H Kindelberger, North American president, "Has a very good reputation with this government. . . . There are not enough like him. We do not want to do any injury to such a man. You may draw your own inferences from this." Kindelberger, formerly an Army lieutenant and chief engineer of the bitterly anti-union Douglas Aircraft, helped draft the presidential proclamation taking over the North American plant. This startling information was elicited from Senator James F Byrnes,

tured it. The witch-hunt started by the press is recognized by labor leaders as a method of fascism.

It is significant that in the Wall St. publications there is no mention of radicalism, subversiveness, etc; the President is applauded for having smashed labor.

### Wall St Applauds Crackdown

IN Monograph 26 of O'Mahoney's Monopoly Investigation it is pointed out that the 200 families which own, control and manage the affairs of the US for their own profit and power, use the American Newspaper Publishers Association as an agency against the general welfare of the people. The almost unanimous support of the press in the present "crackdown" on labor may serve future historians as an example.

The term "crackdown" is never used in the commercial press with liberal, labor, and miscellaneous readership. Here, however, is what Wall St. tells Big Business:

Dow, Jones & Co financial newsletter (June 5, written before the aviation strike): "A crackdown on labor, which has been called for by the general public (i.e., by the press—ed note) and the Army and Navy ever since the national defense program got started, is still not in sight. President Roosevelt and his chief aides are as determined as ever to speak strong but not to act. Even the new sweeping 'commandeer-anything' bill will not be invoked to compel labor unions to stop striking defense plants from asking more wages." Congress may take the ball away from the Administration, put restrictive legislation through. In that case, the Administration will have been saved politically from the unpleasant task of cracking down on its own accord."

This Dow, Jones report squares with Washington correspondents' reports that Mr Roosevelt wanted to have Stimson or Knox crack labor while he remained ostensibly the friend of labor. The aviation strike, however, altered the situation. Immediately the cry of radical leadership was raised and the President acted. Then the press applauded and editorials almost without exception blamed the radicals. But this is Wall Street's report:

### Wall St Says "Crackdown"

"LABOR CRACKDOWN: President Roosevelt acted so suddenly in the N A Aviation strike that it took many officials by surprise. But even when the executive order for the Army to take over the plant had been issued, it was known by only a few that the 'draft industry' clause . . . had not been used. There is a limit to which the labor-minded Administration will go in allowing workers to impede defense production. Congress will not be restrained now from going ahead with some kind of restrictive legislation to keep labor in line. With that specific authority, the Administration will be even less inclined to tolerate work stoppages."—Dow, Jones, June 12.

Nowhere in the Dow, Jones reports are there references to the political ideas of workingmen. It is labor that is being kept in line, it is labor that Mr Roosevelt is cracking down on.

And the payoff: the Business Index for the week was 101, compared to 99.8 a week ago and 80.3 a year ago. "A new recovery high," reported Dow, Jones; "there is nothing to indicate that it will not move steadily into still higher ground."

Stock Market: "Market sentiment has been buoyed recently by the Administration's firmer stand on labor matters."

Commodity Prices: "... are now at the highest level in about 4 years. The Dow, Jones futures index has advanced more than 4% since the end of May (i.e., less than 12 days) and is more than 32% above a year ago."

The actual meaning of events in Inglewood, both labor leaders and financial journals agree, was an Administration attempt to put an end to collective bargaining. The Journal of Commerce said, "The threat that any strike-bound defense plant may be taken over by the Army if the mediation of the National Mediation Board is not accepted, has now transformed that agency into a compulsory arbitration board." Labor leaders know from experience that without the strike weapon collective bargaining, which is provided for by law, is meaningless. There are no stoppages of work in Nazi Germany, and there is no collective bargaining either.

Frank Ryhlik and Edward Flynn of the NY Post Washington Bureau reported: "Secretary Stimson has steadily placed virtually the entire responsibility at the door of labor, without making much distinction as to its political coloration." Big newspapers used the North American strike as an excuse for a new attack on the Wagner Act. The NY Times, which was forced by the Labor Board to discontinue anti-union activities against its own employees, blamed the Labor Board for the entire strike situation. Recently the Times signed a contract with the Newspaper Guild providing for \$110,000 annual raises for members of its commercial department.

### Free Press in L A

HARRY CHANDLER, owner of the Los Angeles Times, was the original backer of Donald Douglas, most anti-union aircraft manufacturer in America, one of whose plants is across the street from North American in Inglewood, and he has retained a heavy financial interest in the Southern California aircraft industry. LA Times, which is more hostile to labor than any other paper in the country, is particularly unreasonable on the subject of aircraft labor. During the strike the Times extracted full value from the anti-labor statements made by Administration spokesmen, and carried stories with false headlines like, "Mob at Plane Plant Believed Armed with Own Gas Bombs," and news stories like, "Rigorous training in mob-handling and street fighting tactics was apparent in the strike leaders' direction of the battle with police." While the Times was perverting the headlines it also carried two winning editorials in a contest it conducted in Los Angeles schools on "The Free Press." They were entitled, "What a Free Press Means to America," "Free

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acting administration leader in the Senate, whose appointment to the Supreme Court is being violently protested by Negro organizations.

Corporations with government contracts are rolling in money. Dividends declared in May 1941 by 1156 corporations, banks, insurance companies, are largest since 1937 (NYT June 1). January to May total dividends: \$1,623,514,308.

Retail food prices, according to US Dep't of Labor, have advanced 8 to 10%. Rent, in workmen's districts, is up 12 to 22%. Actually every housekeeper knows these official figures are far below the increased prices for food. CIO news pointed out: "1) Price increases are not primarily due to wage increases, anti-labor propaganda to the contrary; 2) The raising of money wages is necessary to prevent the cutting of real wages by increased living costs."

When the North American strike began it was no different in character from the Vultee strike, where the red herring was used unsuccessfully and wages were finally raised. Mr. Roosevelt several months ago denounced the "erroneous impression" produced by certain newspapers. "It is a pity that many people have been led to believe labor disputes are interfering seriously with production," said the President; actually only 1/400th of the defense industry was affected. (Press conference, March 4.) Sec'y of Navy Knox testified at hearings on the Navy Appropriation Bill that "this agitation and excitement in the newspapers on that subject (strikes) is utterly unwarranted." (IN FACT April 7.)

The worst offenders at that time were the NY Times and Roy Howard's United Press which supplied the exaggerated stories the Times and other papers used.

### Lewis Predicted War and Fascism

Immediately following the third election of FDR, IN FACT reported (Nov 18) that there was "a real and growing fear that America will be drawn into the European war by Spring, as many Willkie spokesmen predicted." This has happened. IN FACT also reported "a real and growing fear that Roosevelt will destroy the gains labor made in 8 years; Roosevelt is determined to 'unify' labor by destroying the CIO."

These statements, which seemed rash to many pro-labor, pro-FDR readers, had as their authority American Labor Party leaders who had attended a conference with John L Lewis immediately after the election. Lewis said he was convinced from conversations with Roosevelt that the President did not intend the CIO to survive; that he could not take the nation into war before he broke the pro-peace militant labor movement. Lewis feared that Willkie would also go pro-war and against militant labor, and would smash the CIO if elected. But, Lewis explained to the NY conference, if Willkie were elected there would be a 3-month breathing spell in which CIO would cement its ranks and be prepared to fight wartime anti-labor fascism.

Mr Roosevelt's friends did not like these statements. But they remained the views of fighting CIO leaders.

Now (June 15) Lewis believes his fears have been confirmed. Labor's Non-partisan League of which he is chairman, has issued a denunciation of Roosevelt, holding him responsible for "the blackest week" in American labor history. The statement:

"In a virtual tidal wave of reaction, the Administration sponsored legislation that advances far along the totalitarian path of forced labor. It embraced compulsory arbitration, perverted the Conscription Act into a strikebreaking weapon, deserted the unemployed, accepted a blanket condemnation of strikes, and, finally, ordered Federal troops with drawn bayonets on strikebreaking duty.

"The week ended in a witch-hunting free-for-all with Administration sources outdoing the Dies (Unamerican) Committee in slandering elected labor representatives.

"Congressional actions, plus the work-or-fight and Army strikebreaking orders of the Administration, all add up to the most severe crisis in the history of the modern American labor movement. Unless the events of this terrible week can be reversed, it is clear that American democracy will soon become just another museum piece to be set aside the former democracies of the Old World."

### Many Unions Make Charges of Fascism

The Non-Partisan League not only accused the Administration of fascist methods, but denied authoritatively the newspaper falsehoods of subversive radical activities in the aviation plants. Many newspapers suppressed the powerful statement or gave it a line or two. Few played it up. Likewise almost the entire press which had redbaiting labor with exaggerated and frequently falsified headlines, driving the world war from the front page, suppressed or buried in back pages the protest of President Murray of the CIO against the use of Federal troops against labor, and the appeal Murray made to his 5,000,000 members to organize to defeat the nazi-like wave of anti-labor legislation in Congress and State Legislatures. Likewise the press suppressed the protests from unions throughout America against "reaction," "fascism," "attempts to wipe out all the rights of labor."

Confirming the view of the Non-Partisan League was the manner the plant seizure was carried out. Soldiers arrested 18 strikers and a CIO lawyer, held them incommunicado at an Army camp, subjected them to questioning by the FBI. Armed troops were still patrolling working class neighborhoods a week later.

Strike leaders were denied employment, beginning the blacklist of active unionists talked of in Washington. Inside the plant, the Army instituted a thorough-going speed-up.

## Congress Pays Off

In Congress the lines are closely drawn between that part which is paying back the manufacturers and corporations who buy the elections and that part which is either independent or which is brave enough to disregard the financial backers of both the Republican and Democratic parties.

Numerous Senators and Representatives introduced American-style fascist bills, but others exposed this attempt to bring the Hitler-Mussolini system into America. In this alignment, Rep Vito Marcantonio did not stand alone.

Senator Pat McCarren, Nevada: "If you say to labor every time it has a grievance that it will be confronted with a bayonet, that is not my idea of Americanism. Are you going to bring the German tactics into this country?"

Senator Sheridan Downey named the companies and their big profits, showed how the cost of living had increased, and justified the aviation strike. Strikes would have been impossible, he said, if the companies paid decent living wage.

Senator LaFollette "questioned the premise that a few communist leaders took the workers on strike" and that they returned "simply because the Army took over." (NY Times June 12.)

Senator Wheeler recalled that in a recent strike in Los Angeles a US mediator was intoxicated all the time he was there. "They blamed communists for the failure to settle the strike and everyone in Los Angeles knew who was responsible."

Apparently Wheeler, one of the first 20 Senators to subscribe to IN FACT, was referring to one of IN FACT's first scoops, the story of the Vultee strike. Dec 16 IN FACT reported: "The Vultee strike story was manipulated. . . . The main truth was that Major Sidney Simpson, War Dep't aide and conciliator, was too drunk to negotiate a peaceful settlement. The CIO says so but the press suppressed the story." The United Press (Roy Howard's agency) "took the liberty of faking" the CIO statement on Vultee; the Associated Press (serving almost every morning daily in US and Canada) sent out an order: 'Kill story CIO accused Maj Simpson intoxication.'

President Roosevelt now goes down in history alongside Presidents Hayes and Cleveland, who also used the Army to smash strikes and destroy labor unions.

The first time in history Federal troops were called in peacetime against labor was in 1877 in the great railroad strikes. More than 100 workmen were killed, hundreds wounded.

This was the time the American press, owned by rugged individualists instead of corporations, nevertheless took the side of the corporations as usual. The Chicago Tribune proposed putting arsenic in sandwiches and giving them to the unemployed who were driven to begging for food, as a way to decrease unemployment. The NY Times in one day's issue (July 24 1877) used 100 smear-words against labor, including: "hoodlums, thieves, looters, communists, agitators, gangs, lawbreakers, bummers, enemies of society, idiots, terrible fellows." July 24 1877 when Chicago freight yards struck, Times had subheadline: "The city in possession of communists." (These and considerable documentation of the falsehood in the press aimed against American labor may be found in "American Labor Struggles," by Samuel Yellen, Harcourt, Brace, \$3.50.)

In the Pullman Strike when Cleveland used the Army to smash the union headed by Eugene V Debs, the President sent troops despite a protest from Gov Altgeld that Chicago did not need them. Altgeld telegraphed: "The newspapers' accounts have in many cases been pure fabrications, and in other wild exaggerations. You have been imposed on." The Chicago papers called Gov Altgeld a "revolutionary anarchist."

But neither the falsehoods in the press nor Cleveland's Army broke that strike. The railroad managers then used the courts. They got out injunctions prohibiting picketing, ending trial by jury, abolishing free speech. (The courts did exactly what the Mussolini Blackshirts and Hitler Brownshirts did illegally.) Judge Grosscup summoned a grand jury and told it the strike was an insurrection. (June 1941 Att'y Gen'l Jackson called California strike insurrection.)

Press of America Guardian of Democracy."

The radio commentators joined the press columnists in not only redbaiting but in attacking and slandering labor. When radio attacks an organization, such as the CIO and AFL, the organization libeled or smeared can ask for equal time to answer, but when labor itself is attacked, the commentator is safe. One reason commentators attack labor is because they are paid enormous wages by enemies of labor. Not only are persons such as George Sokolsky paid by the National Association of Manufacturers for the express purpose of fighting labor unions, but persons such as Lowell Thomas and Edwin C Hill are in the pay of such organizations as Sun Oil and American Oil, whose owners are anti-labor. Thomas and Hill (and most other commentators) consistently attack labor—and earn big money.

The attack on aviation labor was almost universal. According to PM (June 12) the commentators dragged the French defense strikes out of mothballs saying "Look what happened to France." This old falsehood, blaming labor for the fall of France when the political and military heads and the bankers and munitions manufacturers were to blame, is still going the rounds. (If enough readers write a postcard asking for documentary facts on why France fell, we will print that story.) Only one commentator refused to join in the mob hysteria against labor. Said Quincy Howe (WQXR): "There is nothing illegal, unpatriotic, or un-American about a strike. . . . Most of our news sources have vastly exaggerated the scope of the strike situation. . . . I cannot recall a single strike in the last several months which has not been attributed to communist leadership. Of course there are communists in the labor movement . . . but unless the communists have real grievances to work with they cannot get far. . . ." (PM June 12)

## Gold Check Polishers

ALONG with NY, Ohio, Washington, Conn, and other state CIO councils and scores of unions, the NY Newspaper Guild meeting passed a resolution condemning the use of the Army against labor, voting 163 to 30. When result was announced many who did not attend meeting sent Roosevelt a telegram reaffirming "loyalty." Among signers: Dorothy Thompson, Samuel Grafton, Franklin P Adams, columnists, and Reuben Maury, editorial writer NYD News and Colliers (directed by J P Morgan & Co). These Guild members make from \$10,000 to \$100,000 a year or more. Heywood Broun founded the Guild to stop brass check polishing.

## Iconoclasm

"Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist."—Emerson

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